Case 2780

Platyscelis Latreille, 1818 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed designation of *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781 as the type species, so conserving *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to designate *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781 as the type species of the tenebrionid beetle genus *Platyscelis* Latreille, 1818, which includes a number of agricultural pest species, in accordance with universal understanding and usage. The nominal genus *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845, which also includes a number of pest species, will also be conserved.

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1. Latreille (1818, p. 23) established *Platyscelis* with *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807 (p. 208, pl. 45, fig. C, c–d) as the single included species. Dejean (1821, p. 65) listed *Platyscelis* with two included species, *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781 (p. 44, pl. C, fig. 10) and '*Platyscelis melas* Illiger?' (a nomen nudum). Fischer von Waldheim (1823, pl. 20) figured *Platyscelis hypolithus* (Pallas) and three new species (*gages* (a junior subjective synonym of *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807), *melas* and *rugifrons*); all four species were described under *Platyscelis* in the subsequently published text of the work (Fischer von Waldheim, 1824, pp. 194–195). Latreille (1825, p. 375) gave a short description of the genus under the vernacular name 'Platyscèle' but did not mention any of the included species. Lepeletier & Serville (1825, p. 157) published a description of *Platyscelis* and included two species in the genus, *hypolithus* Pallas and *polita* Sturm. In the following year Sturm (1826, p. 185) listed *Platyscelis* with five included species, only two of which, *hypolithus* Pallas and *rugifrons* Fischer von Waldheim, 1823, had available names. In a German translation of Latreille's 1825 work (Latreille, 1827, p. 367), Berthold altered the vernacular 'Platyscèle' to *Platyscelis*. Guérin (1828, p. 41) designated *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781 (misspelled as '*hippolythes*') as the type species of *Platyscelis*. This same type species was later accepted by Hope (1840, p. 124) and by Gebien (1938, p. 66).

2. None of the coleopterists working in the second half of the 19th century or since has accredited the authorship of *Platyscelis* to Latreille (1818), nor to any of the other entomologists who used the name between 1818 and 1827. All have ascribed the authorship to Latreille (1825), despite the vernacular form then used (see, for example, Lacordaire, 1859, p. 229).

3. *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845 (p. 76) was proposed without included species. In 1860 (p. 527), Motschulsky referred five species to the genus. Kaszab (1940, p. 937) designated one of these, *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807, as the type species of *Oodescelis*. (The spelling of the author's name 'Motschulsky' has been adopted, which accords with that

used in most bibliographies and nomenclators and in nearly all current entomological works, and has been accepted previously in the (1987) *Official Lists and Indexes of Names and Works in Zoology*; see, for example, p. 46 (*Anodius*) and p. 141 (*Paradoxides*)).

4. Recognition that the generic name *Platyscelis* was established by Latreille in 1818 leads to the acceptance of *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807 as the valid type species by monotypy. In consequence the name *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845 becomes a junior objective synonym of *Platyscelis* Latreille, 1818 and the latter is the valid name for the genus currently named *Oodescelis*. *Pleiopleura* Seidlitz, 1893 (p. 343; type species *Platyscelis striatus* Motschulsky, 1859, p. 307, designated by Kaszab, 1940, p. 913) would become the valid synonym of *Platyscelis* as this name has been understood. *Platyscelis* and *Oodescelis* are used in the sense typified by *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781 and *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807 respectively. Any change will be confusing and will upset the long-established usage of the names for two well known genera. The genus *Oodescelis* includes 38 nominal species at present, and *Platyscelis* 20 species (Egorov, 1989, 1990). Both genera are Palaearctic in distribution and a number of species in both genera are of economic importance as plant pests. The names have been used in the agricultural, horticultural and pest control literature, as well as a number of taxonomic works, including Byzova & Keleinikova (1964, p. 483) and Medvedev (1965, p. 369; 1974, pp. 127, 129). A list of 10 references for each of the two names is held by the Commission Secretariat. *Platyscelis* is the type genus of the tribe PLATYSCELIDINI Lacordaire, 1859 (p. 229; published as 'Groupe Platyscélides') (see Gebien, 1938, p. 66).

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

(1) to use its plenary powers to set aside all designations of type species for the nominal genus *Platyscelis* Latreille, 1818, prior to that by Guérin (1828) of *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781;

(2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
   (a) *Platyscelis* Latreille, 1818 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Guérin (1828) *Tenebrio hypolithus* Pallas, 1781, as ruled in (1) above;
   (b) *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Kaszab (1940) *Blaps polita* Sturm, 1807;

(3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
   (a) *hypolithus* Pallas, 1781, as published in the binomen *Tenebrio hypolithus* (specific name of the type species of *Platyscelis* Latreille, 1818);
   (b) *polita* Sturm, 1807, as published in the binomen *Blaps polita* (specific name of the type species of *Oodescelis* Motschulsky, 1845).

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